

5EL-15-1994

MAY 30 1994

91

1. TASK NUMBER 960424CCC7185		2. INVESTIGATOR'S ID 8950		EPIDEMIOLOGIC INVESTIGATION REPORT
3. OFFICE CODE 896	4. DATE OF ACCIDENT YR MO DAY 96 06 10	5. DATE INITIATED YR MO DAY 96 05 15		
6. SYNOPSIS OF ACCIDENT OR COMPLAINT The automatic pop-up turn-off feature in a toaster oven failed, and bread being toasted caught fire. Manufacturer replaced the product same problem caused a second food fire. No injuries incurred.				
7. LOCATION (Home, School, etc.) Home		8. CITY Charlottesville		9. STATE VA
10A. FIRST PRODUCT Toaster Oven		10B. TRADE/BRAND NAME Black & Decker		10C. MODEL NUMBER TR0200
10D. MANUFACTURER NAME AND ADDRESS Black & Decker, PO Box 618, Hampstead, Maryland 21074-0618				
11A. SECOND PRODUCT		11B. TRADE/BRAND NAME		11C. MODEL NUMBER
<div style="text-align: center;"> <p>MFR/PRVLR NOTIFIED 10/10/96</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Comments made</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Comments attached</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excisions/Revisions</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Firm has not requested further notice</p> </div>				
11D. MANUFACTURER NAME AND ADDRESS				
12. AGE OF VICTIM NI 999	13. SEX No Injury 9	14. DISPOSITION No injury	15. INJURY DIAGNOSIS No Injury 70	
16. BODY PART (S) INVOLVED No Injury 99	17. RESPONDENT Complainant 1	18. TYPE OF INVESTIGATION Telephone 2	19. TIME SPENT (OPERATIONAL HOURS) 9	
20. ATTACHMENT(S) None 0	21. CASE SOURCE Complaint 07		22. SAMPLE COLLECTION NUMBER	
23. PERMISSION TO DISCLOSE NAMES (NON NEISS CASES ONLY) YES X NO				
24. REVIEW DATE	25. REVIEWED BY		26. REGIONAL OFFICE DIRECTOR	
27. DISTRIBUTION O:EHDS CC:				

PRE-ACCIDENT:

These two incidents both took place in the kitchen of a single family urban duplex dwelling occupied by a single adult female (Complainant) over a period of nine months. The product involved was an electric toaster oven, the first oven purchased new by Complainant and the second, identical oven product provided by the manufacturer as a replacement for the first toaster oven.

ACCIDENT:

The first accident took place in June 1995 when Complainant was using her recently purchased toaster oven to toast a single slice of rye bread. With the heat setting between low and medium, she busied herself about her kitchen waiting for the "pop-up" button to activate, indicated the bread was finished being toasted. After several minutes, she discovered there to be flames in the oven cavity, the bread burning and the automatic control still down. The flames did not escape the oven cavity. She unplugged the product, smothered the flames with towels, and carried the smoldering product outside to end the incident.

After receiving an identical replacement toaster oven from the manufacturer (see below), Complainant was again in March 1996 toasting a single slice of bread when again the pop-up button on the oven failed to activate. Complainant, who had been watching for a reoccurrence of the failure, noted the bread charring in the oven cavity and opened the door to stop the process, the bread breaking into flames when the opened door provided oxygen. Complainant smothered the small fire and ended the second incident.

POST-ACCIDENT:

After the first fire, Complainant called the manufacturer and reported the fire, advising them of the failure of the "pop-up" on/off feature. The firm requested the product be returned to them, which Complainant did, and she received a new, identical model toaster oven. Wary, however, of its use after the first accident, she watched it carefully during use. When the second incident of failure occurred in March 1996, she again contacted the manufacturer, who again asked her to return the oven (she did) and provided her a new (third) toaster oven, same product, which Complainant now has and uses, though she will not use the product unless she can be immediately available to watch for the pop-up switch to again fail.

In none of the incidents were fire authorities summoned or damages or injuries incurred except to the products. Convinced, however, that the product is design-flawed in the pop-up feature, Complainant reported the matter to USCPSC.

PRODUCT IDENTIFICATION:

Product is a Model TR0200 electric toaster oven made by Black & Decker, Post Office Box 618, Hampstead, Maryland 21074-0618, telephone 800-231-9786. Complainant purchased the product new for a price of approximately \$40 in February 1995 at the Best Department Store, Route 29 North, Charlottesville, Virginia. At the manufacturer's request, she returned the product to them after the June 1995 first incident, and received a few weeks thereafter the second toaster oven, same model, which she used approximately twice weekly until the second incident in March 1996. She returned the second toaster oven, at the manufacturer's request, and received the third (exact same model) oven, which she presently has and uses in her home.

As to specifics of use and incidents, Complainant stated as follows: As to flames, in neither incident did the flames escape the food cavities of the oven. The first incident, the bread inside the cavity burned, with flames as high as four inches, but were contained inside the product. The second incident resulted in flames only when Complainant opened the door to take out the charring bread. As to cleanness of the ovens at time of incidents, Complainant stated she was fastidious about keeping the toaster ovens exceptionally clean, as both were when the fires occurred. In both cases, the on/off pop-up switch failed to activate, ending the toasting cycle. In both cases, the heat dial for the units was set just below medium on the three position (low/medium/high) dial. And in both cases, the food that caught fire was single pieces of unbuttered (or otherwise dressed) bread.

ATTACHMENTS:

None.